

MSWCC staffers attend NACD Southeast Region Meeting

GATLINBURG, TN — Commission staff members, MACD board members, county commissioners and clerks headed to the Smoky Mountains for the NACD Southeast Regional Meeting, held Aug. 10-13, 2019, at the Park Vista Hotel in Gatlinburg.

Events included a Partnership Roundtable, a general session with the keynote address by Tennessee Commissioner of Agriculture Dr. Charlie Hatcher, D.V.M.; the Southeast Region Conservation Hall of

Fame Luncheon; and discussion of the 2018 Farm Bill Implementation and Conservation Assessment and Ranking Tool, or CART, by Jimmy Bramlett, NRCS Deputy Chief of Programs, Washington, D.C.

The general session on Tuesday, Aug. 13, included group meetings, an NRCS Workload Cycle-Time Study



Pictured at the NACD Southeast Regional Meeting, (left to right) FRONT ROW: Area 4 NRCS Conservationist Kevin Kennedy; MSWCC Executive Director Mark Gilbert; MACD First Vice President Anita Cowan; Hinds County Deputy Commissioner Dr. David Powell; Franklin Co. Commissioner Buddy Wilkins; Desoto County Clerk and MCDEA President Meleiah Tyus, and Hope Daley, SECDEA President, MACD Secretary/Treasurer, MCDEA Secretary, and Jefferson Davis Co. SWCD Administrative Assistant. In Hope's arms is future conservationist Gordon Evans from Kentucky. Gordon is the son of Kayleigh Evans, SECDEA Vice President. BACK ROW: MSWCC Field Rep Robin Tisdale; MSWCC Field Rep Lauren Wilson, Mona Hagar, Humphries Co.; MSWCC Field Rep Carlee Goode; Humphries Co. Clerk Marilyn Shelton; MSWCC Deputy Administrator Brad Shedd, Madison Co. Clerk Celia Miller; MSWCC Bureau Director Nick Ivy; MSWCC Administrative Assistant Geana Keys; and Southeast Executive Board Member Gary Blair.



MACD First Vice President Anita Cowan and MSWCC Chairman and MACD Past President Pete Hunter pictured at the luncheon.

by James Tillman, Regional Conservationist-Southeast NRCS, Washington, D.C.; David Arnold, Tennessee State Forester and Assistant Commissioner, TN Department of Agriculture; Bill Clabough, Executive Director of Foothills Land Conservancy; and Gary Blair, Southeast Executive Board Member, Mississippi.

Those attending had the opportunity to participate in tours, including:

- Forest Management and Forest Fire Recovery;
- Land Preservation and Outdoor Learning Areas;
- History of Sevier County and Great Smoky Mountains National Park (GSMNP).

The meeting concluded with a banquet with Toastmaster: Franklin Williams S.E. Region Chair presiding; an SCDEA Auction; and speaker David Browning,

“The Mayberry Deputy.”

Those attending from the Commission office included:

Executive Director Mark Gilbert; Deputy Administrator Brad Shedd; Bureau Director Nick Ivy; Administrative Assistant Geana Keys; and Field Reps Robin Tisdale, Carlee Goode and Lauren Wilson.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR UPCOMING EVENTS

Oct. 11-12: 2019 Fall Flower & Garden Fest, Truck Crops Experiment Station, 2024 Experiment Station Road, Crystal Springs, Miss. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Info: <http://extension.msstate.edu/fallfest>.

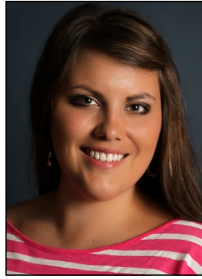
MACD ANNUAL MEETING: Jan. 22-23, 2020, Jackson-Hilton, Jackson, MS

NACD 74th ANNUAL MEETING: Feb. 8-12, 2020, Las Vegas. For more information, please visit NACD's Annual Meeting webpage.

Commission announces two staff promotions

The Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission is pleased to announce that Chelsey Gazaway and Robin Tisdale have both received promotions.

In her new position as a staff officer, Gazaway serves as Envirothon Coordinator, as coordinator of the MSWCC Conservation Youth Camp, and as Education Coordinator for MSWCC programs in the



CHELSEY GAZAWAY



ROBIN TISDALE

for the North area, Tisdale is also responsible for Surface Mining reporting in the state.

Tisdale joined MSWCC in 2017. The Mississippi Soil and Water

state. Gazaway joined the commission in 2014.

Robin Tisdale is now a Natural Resource Specialist III for MSWCC. In addition to serving as the Field Rep

Conservation is charged through the Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Law to effectively guide and promote the conservation, development, protection and proper utilization of the soil, water and related resources of the state.

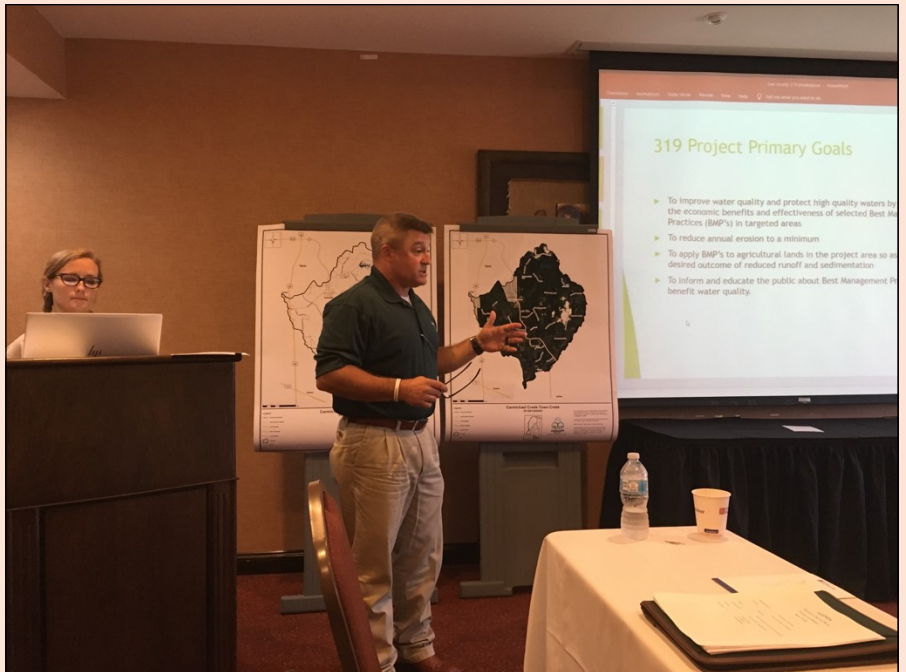
For additional information about our agency, you may visit our website at www.mswcc.ms.gov, or contact Kathy Dougan, Public Relations Director, at 601-354-7645, ext. 317, or email kdougan@mswcc.ms.gov.

Smith, Tisdale attend Lee County SWCD August meeting

Lee Smith reports on upcoming 319 Project

MSWCC Environmental Administrator Lee Smith updates attendees at the Lee County Supervisors' Breakfast and SWCD meeting Aug. 19, 2019, about the upcoming Carmichael Creek Watershed 319 Project.

MSWCC Field Rep Robin Tisdale (behind podium) assists Smith with his presentation.



Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission

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Mississippi State, MS

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Mississippi State, MS

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MS Envirothon team places 5th at International event

RALEIGH, NC — The Mississippi Envirothon team placed fifth at the National Conservation Foundation, or NCF-Envirothon, and placed first in the Current Issues category at the international competition, held the week of July 28-Aug. 3, 2019, on the North Carolina State University Campus in Raleigh.

Fifty-three teams, from the United States, China, and Canada competed this year, with 500 students, advisors and guests attending the event. The Mississippi Envirothon team received a \$1,250 scholarship from Idaho Envirothon that will be divided among the five team members, and they received a plaque for the highest score in Current Issues with a score of 94.5, which was 21 points more than the Pennsylvania first-place team scored in the same category.

The teams are judged in six categories – Aquatics, Forestry, Soils, Wildlife, Current Events and Oral Presentation. The maximum score for the first five categories is 100 points; the maximum score for the Oral Presentation is 200 points.

The top five winning teams and the overall scores were: Pennsylvania (567.17); Virginia (566.83); North Carolina (562.17); New York (561.00); and Mississippi (559.17). Only eight points separated the first place Pennsylvania team from Mississippi's fifth-place Envirothon team, so the competition was fierce.

"The Mississippi team did an exceptional job taking on the challenges of the NCF-Envirothon International competition," Envirothon Coordinator Chelsey Gazaway said. "Placing fifth and also receiving the highest Current Issue score is a major accomplishment. The team studied hard and also had great trainers along the way."



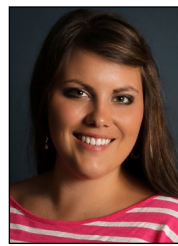
The MISSISSIPPI ENVIROTHON TEAM accepts a scholarship check from Tamra Cikaitoga (at left) of the Idaho Envirothon. Mississippi Envirothon Team members (left to right) are: Claire Cizdziel, Sienna Cizdziel, Gillian Meyers, Emma Teng and Anna Kang. NCF Executive Gene Schmidt is on the right. PHOTO BY CHELSEY GAZAWAY,

Gazaway, a Staff Officer for Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission, is responsible for organizing and coordinating the Mississippi Envirothon. She conducts workshops during the school year to prepare teachers and advisors to train teams for the event.

"I am so proud of these kids," Mississippi Envirothon Team Advisor

'Placing fifth and also receiving the highest Current Issue score is a major accomplishment. The team studied hard and also had great trainers along the way.'

— Envirothon Coordinator Chelsey Gazaway



Amy Rosen said. "Everything they have achieved was earned through hard work and dedication. They constantly amaze me, and we are looking forward to another great year."

In order to progress to NCF-Envirothon Competition, Oxford High School Team A placed first in the State Envirothon, held April 26, 2019, at the FFA Center in Raymond, MS. This is the 11th time in the past 12 years that the Oxford team has won the State Envirothon Competition and represented the state at the International Envirothon competition.

Mississippi Envirothon, a program of the Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission and supported by Mississippi Association of Conservation Districts, is a hands-on competition designed to challenge students in grades 9 through 12 to explore natural resources.

Competitors are tested in the categories of: aquatic ecology, forestry, soils/land use, wildlife, and a current environmental issue.

The 2019 area competitions included 53 student teams, 288 students in the competition, and 45 teacher advisors on-site who worked with the teams to prepare for Mississippi Envirothon.

Through local soil and water conservation districts, more than 125 volunteers and resource personnel from state and federal natural resource agencies and organizations worked with educators, sharing environmental expertise to prepare the teams for the competitions.

In intensive preparation for the competitions, students received hands-on assistance from the experts, who tested and judged the area competitions, and assisted at the statewide competition.

The Mississippi Envirothon is funded through grants from the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Chevron. Scholarships are funded by Georgia-Pacific Monticello Mill.